

MAY AND JUNE 2024

THE 'KEEP THE HEID' NEWSLETTER!

From North Ayrshire Justice Services Service User Involvement Project



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

Our big news is that our 2024 cookbook has finally been sent to the printers and will be getting collected soon. We can't wait to share our new recipes with our cooking challenge participants and see what they think of them. Keep an eye out over the coming newsletters to see what they've been trying. We can't wait to see it and try some of the recipes.. we might even have a wee team challenge to see who can make the best meals! Then we can share some photos with you all.

Despite it being (allegedly) summertime, the weather has not been the best recently. Nonetheless our walking group have still been getting out and we've had some really positive feedback from people that it is helping them feel less isolated. We're really pleased about this as that is one of our key aims. We hope that this can continue and are also thinking of ideas we can introduce for winter time when the *really* bad weather is here!



REALISING WHEN THINGS HAVE GONE WRONG...



In this edition we are hearing from someone who would like to keep his identity anonymous for now. He says when things feel better he might share more of his story and share his name, but he feels a little ashamed at the moment.

I served a long time in custody and for the last few months of my sentence I stupidly just assumed that things would be better when I got out just because I wouldn't be in the jail. I thought it was as simple as that. Even though my Justice Services Social Worker told me multiple times that we needed to think about the realities of living in the community and not associating with past pals.. I didn't listen to her. She tried to speak to me about thinking of things I might be interested in so she could look into community groups but again, I just thought I would be happy because I wasn't in the jail.

After a few months of being out, I felt bored so often because I realised I didn't have folk in my life before jail that didn't use drugs and get into bother. So when I was trying to stay away from them, I left myself with no company.

See if I'm being honest, I felt lonely too. Which I struggle to admit even now. My Social Worker did her best but I wasn't telling her how I was feeling enough.

I started spending time with people I shouldn't be seeing and that just led to me getting involved in stuff I really shouldn't have been. Again my Social Worker could see something was happening and she gave me multiple chances to come clean and I didn't. Eventually she didn't have any other choice than to give me a formal warning for not sticking to my Licence conditions. You'd think that would have been enough of a warning sign eh? But it wasn't.

I kept going down that path and despite trying rehab, ultimately I ended up being recalled. Sitting back in custody I can see how much I didn't prepare for getting out, and I didn't actually recognise how challenging it would be. It's hard making good choices in your old community when your only pals still do drugs and drink. I should have thought about that sooner and done some work to prepare. I hope next time, I get it right!

“NEXT TIME I’M GOING TO SIT DOWN WITH MY SOCIAL WORKER AND TALK ABOUT POSITIVE WAYS TO FILL MY TIME AND I’M ACTUALLY GOING TO LISTEN TO WHAT SHE’S SAYING INSTEAD OF JUST ASSUMING I’LL BE LIVING MY BEST LIFE WHEN I GET OUT AND IT’LL ALL BE A BREEZE.

I’LL DO THAT, AND I’LL ALSO MAKE SURE I’M SHARING WHEN I’M STRUGGLING... BECAUSE NAEBODY CAN HELP YOU IF THEY DON’T KNOW HOW YOU FEEL”



LAST BUT NOT LEAST...



For this month we made 'fakeaway' chicken chow mein.

Ingredients

Thumb-size piece of fresh root ginger
2 garlic cloves
3 tbsp tomato ketchup
2 tbsp oyster sauce
2 tbsp reduced-salt soy sauce
1 large red pepper
5 spring onions
200g beansprouts
1 large chicken breast
3 packets of egg noodles
1 tbsp sunflower oil

Method

Remove the skin from the ginger using a peeler and grate 1 tbsp from the root.

Put in a bowl, crush in the garlic and then add the oyster and soy sauce, ketchup and 3 tbsp water and stir them all together.

Quarter the pepper and remove the insides and the stalk. Slice it into strips.

Cut the ends off the spring onions and then chop them up.

Cut the chicken into bite-sized pieces.

Bring a pan of water to the boil and drop in the noodles. Turn off the heat and then after 4 minutes drain the noodles in a colander.

Heat the wok - it's hot enough when it starts to smoke. Add the oil and chicken. Keep moving the chicken around the wok until it is half white, half pink. Add the pepper and stir-fry for a further 1 minute. Pour the sauce into the wok and stir well until bubbling.

Add the noodles, beansprouts and spring onions a handful at a time, then toss into the sauce until it is well coated, stirring constantly until the beansprouts wilt.

Serve in a bowl. You can also add in lots of different types of vegetables and fruits - pineapple is one wee tip!

"ANOTHER AMAZING RECIPE.. SO GOOD TO KNOW THAT WE CAN ENJOY OUR FAVOURITE TAKEAWAYS BUT THEY'RE HEALTHIER AND CHEAPER!"

(MAD PROJECT MEMBER)

